

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
ON THE ESTIMATES FOR THE MINISTRY OF  
DEFENCE, THE FEDERATION ARMED FORCES  
AND THE CIVIL DEFENCE AT DEWAN  
RAKYAT, ON 13TH DECEMBER 1962

Mr Chairman, Sir,

For the year 1963, as in 1962, the estimates for the Ministry of Defence, the Federation Armed Forces and the Civil Defence appear under one head, namely Head 15. We are, in fact, going one step further than last year in this process of integration. Honourable Members will see that, with one exception of a few "peculiar-to-service" items under Other Charges Annually Recurrent and Other Charges Special Expenditure, the estimates for the civilian employees, the three Services of the Armed Forces, both regular and volunteer, and the Civil Defence are shown together. The object of this is to ensure that there will be greater flexibility in the use of funds to the common advantage of all services, to develop further the utilisation of the common-user facilities and services, and to make it feasible to fill certain staff and common-user appointments by officers and other ranks of either the Army or the Navy or the Air Force.

The Ministry of Defence has now for some months been functioning as a fully integrated Ministry under a Permanent Secretary system in which civil servants and staff officers of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force work side by side as members of the same team. It is my intention, Sir, to perpetuate this. This change to a fully integrated Ministry is reflected in certain changes in the senior appointments in the Civil Service and the Armed Forces.

Although the Defence Estimates for 1963 show an increase of 3.4 million dollars over the provision for 1962, the overall Defence expenditure is still less than ten per cent of the country's total budget as was the case in respect of 1961 and 1962. I should, however, like to sound a note of warning to this House that this happy state of affairs will not last very long as there is bound to be an increase in defence expenditure with the advent of Malaysia. The increase of 3.4 million dollars mentioned earlier has been

caused by the natural growth of the Armed Forces and no financial provision for any expansion that may be necessary as a result of Malaysia has been included in these Estimates. No doubt, Sir, in the course of the next year I shall have to come to the House to seek supplementary provision for any expansion necessary as a result of Malaysia.

Although the Emergency ended in July, 1960, Units of the Army are operating and will continue to operate in the border area in co-operation with the Royal Federation of Malaya Police and the Thai Forces. Intensified operations against the dwindling number of Communist Terrorists are now in progress in the border area and are expected to continue into 1963. I am, however, happy to inform Honourable Members that, despite the difficulties and hardships encountered by our troops, they are performing their duties in the exemplary manner to which we have now become accustomed. I would also like to take this opportunity, Sir, to once again pay tribute to those members of the Royal Federation of Malaya Police and the Thai Forces who are operating in the border area with our own soldiers.

Honourable Members will recall that recently the Honourable the Prime Minister announced that the Malayan Special Force in the Congo is being reduced from a Brigade Headquarters and two major units to one major unit only. The United Nations Secretary-General very reluctantly agreed to this reduction which is necessitated by the requirements for Malaysia. The Brigade Headquarters will be returning to Malaya shortly and will be re-organised and set up within the Federation. Our troops have continued to perform their duties with the United Nations forces with distinction and one major unit will be attained in the Congo next year as long as their services are required.

Honourable Members will also recall that when I presented the Estimates for 1962, I mentioned that we were assisting the Brunei Government to raise and train the First Battalion of the Brunei Malay Regiment. This battalion is now being trained and is located at Port Dickson. It will return to Brunei when its permanent barracks which are now being constructed are completed some time in 1963.

In spite of the many and varied commitments, the Armed Forces have carried on with their training. Very imaginative training

exercises on a limited scale have been carried out with a view to developing a tactical doctrine to meet changing circumstances; in this respect the Armed Forces in general, and the Army in particular, have been working in close consultation with British and other Commonwealth Forces stationed in Malaya and training will continue in the same manner in 1963.

Malayanisation within the Armed Forces has proceeded on as planned and will be carried on further next year. The recent promotion and appointment of Major-General Tunku Osman as Chief of the Army Staff is a notable landmark in the progress of our Malayanisation.

I must also mention, Sir, that with the expansion of the Armed Forces it will be necessary to expand our training facilities including the Federation Military College as we shall require more and more trained officers. But it may be necessary as a temporary measure to seek assistance from overseas for officers on secondment should our expansion programme so require.

The expansion of the Federation Artillery from one battery to a regiment to which I referred when presenting the 1962 Estimates has been accelerated and will be completed next year. It is hoped that the regiment will become fully operational with its new guns before the end of 1963.

My reference to the Federation Army will not be complete without a word or two about the Territorial Army. The Territorial Army was reorganised in early 1962 to enable it to play its role as an efficient reserve to the regular army. The new organisation consists of a skeleton brigade headquarters and three infantry battalions organised on the standard establishment, the headquarters of a transport column, five transport companies, one supply company and one air despatch platoon. Four signal squadrons, four engineer squadrons and two line-of-communications workshops are also being built up. In addition to these units, an Ordnance maintenance park; a field ambulance, a provost company and ten units of the local defence corps are being established.

The build up of the Territorial Army is being done gradually and will proceed on in the same pace next year. It will steadily expand in strength over a five-year period until it reaches its target of 10,000 volunteers.

Turning to the Royal Malayan Navy, I would like to inform the House, Sir, that during the year under review the Royal Malayan Navy has continued to undertake its peacetime role of constant patrolling of our coasts for the protection of fishing fleets and trading vessels. Ships of the Royal Malayan Navy have carried out considerable minesweeping training and have also taken part in two major exercises alongside ships of other Commonwealth Navies. The Royal Malayan Navy will continue this task in the same way next year.

In addition, the Federation Flag has been shown by our ships for the first time in India, Ceylon, the Borneo Territories, Hongkong and Saigon. A visit to Bangkok was also undertaken. It is also hoped to undertake similar visits in 1963.

During the year 1963 the six fast patrol craft which are at present under consideration in England, will be taken over by the Royal Malayan Navy. These craft will replace the old and slow motor launches which are no longer economic to operate.

There will be a slight increase in manpower during the year 1963 so that the Navy will be able to take over the fast patrol craft as and when their construction and trials are completed. A limited amount of planning for the additional tasks which will be required of the Royal Malayan Navy on the formation of Malaysia has also been undertaken. Units of the Royal Malayan Volunteer Reserve have continued their training as usual.

I now come to the last but not the least important Service, that is, the Royal Malayan Air Force. With the acquisition during 1962 of ten new Twin Pioneer aircraft and four new Single Pioneer aircraft, the Air Force completed its expansion under the Second Five-Year Development Plan. This year it has concentrated on continuation of training of its pilots and technicians to enable it to assume a greater share of the air support to the land and sea forces of the Federation. The Royal Malayan Air Force will assume full responsibility for all air transport required in the border security area by March, 1963.

The flying Training School which was started last year is now fully established and will turn out more pilots to meet the increased commitments of the Royal Malayan Air Force and to expedite Malayanisation. Formed at the same time as the Flying Training

School is the Technical Training School and it will also train more and more technicians required for the maintenance of the additional aircraft; and these technicians will also replace seconded personnel.

The ever increasing number of operational and training sorties being flown in Northern Malaya requires the establishment of a detachment of the Royal Malayan Air Force at an advance airfield nearer the area of operations. To meet this need, Taiping is being developed as an advance post. Our radio navigational aids need expanding and modernising, both at base and in the operational areas, to provide proper degrees of control and safety for the expanded air force. The 1963 estimates, Sir, reflect the need to support the expanded forces, operating at a greater intensity and to meet the existing ground equipment and facilities.

The Royal Malayan Air Force Volunteer Reserve also will continue its training in the pace that is being kept this year.

As I mentioned earlier, Sir, the increases shown against various posts and various sub-heads under O.C.A.R. are required to meet natural growth. The favourable trend in recruitment for the Armed Forces has enabled them to open their various establishments at a quicker rate than had been expected. Honourable Members will no doubt appreciate the fact that an increased number of men in the Armed Forces calls for an increase in the annually recurrent maintenance cost and this in conjunction with worldwide rise in prices has resulted in an increase in the amount of money required for 1963.

Before I conclude, Sir, I would like once again to inform the House that, although it is possible to keep our defence expenditure in these Estimates at a low level, it will have to rise after Malaysia is formed. It will be necessary for us to have adequate forces for the defence of this new and larger territory after Malaysia.

Sir, I beg to move that Head S. 15 stands part of the Bill.